

DEC 16 1997

THE BAPTIST

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

#BXNFMXY
#00002915#
SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
901 COMMERCE ST
NASHVILLE TN 37203-3620
CARRIER ROUTE
005-DTM
12-11
50000

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

DECEMBER 11, 1997

VOL. 121

No. 44

HELP!

THEIR CRY OUR CALL

Lottie Moon Christmas
Offering for
International Missions
Goal: \$100,000,000

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

Youth gather Dec. 29-30

3

WWJD scores with youth

4

Ex. Comm. elects officers

5

Letters to the Editor

10

Baptists deliver fresh water, living water

KAABONG, Uganda (IMB) — They gathered around the well, waiting to fill their jars with the precious, clean water.

The scene recalled Jesus's instructions, recorded in Matthew 10:42, that faithful disciples should give "even a cup of cold water" in the Savior's name.

Southern Baptists had given the money to dig the well in the impoverished African nation of Uganda.

Southern Baptist missionary Bruce Schmidt was there at the well to provide the other kind of water Jesus spoke about when he addressed the woman at the well in Samaria.

Women and children sat on the ground in the scorching afternoon sun to listen to Schmidt. One woman and a child continued to pump the water into their jars. Off to one side, several harsh-looking warriors sat on six-inch wooden stools, traditional portable seats for men in their culture. Some sneered. Several spit chewing tobacco. Some carried guns.

Schmidt's listeners were Karamojong (KAR-ah-mo-zjohng), a semi-nomadic people of northeast Uganda who have begun to turn to Christ after years of vicious tribal warfare and devastating cattle disease.

As Schmidt preached, some in the crowd became restless and noisy. Philip Lochap, a local Christian serving as Schmidt's translator, quieted them.

"The Bible says God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life," Schmidt said. "The Bible says God loves the world so much that he gave his only son that whosoever believes in him will have eter-



LIVING WATER — Southern Baptist missionary Bruce Schmidt (left) and his interpreter, Philip Lochap (center), explain the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ in front of a communal pump installed by Baptists to bring clean water to a remote part of northeastern Uganda. (IMB Photo by P. Kevin Morley)

nal life. God's plan for you is that you have eternal life, too."

To the Karamojong, this was amazing new information, Schmidt explained later. Karamojong traditionally leave their dead in the desert to rot. Believing in any type of eternal life is foreign to this tribe.

"God wants to live with you through Jesus Christ, and at long last when you die, God doesn't want that to be the end," he said. "God wants you to spend eternity with him in heaven."

Now it was time for a prayer. Schmidt asked the crowd to bow their heads in reverence. It appeared to be the first time

any of these proud people had done this.

"Heavenly Father, we thank you for the wonderful gift of water, because we cannot live without water," he prayed. "And we thank you even more for the living water that you have provided us through your son, Jesus Christ."

Then Schmidt asked the crowd to do something they'd certainly never done before: "Repeat this prayer after me."

With Lochap translating, Schmidt proceeded: "Heavenly Father, I need you. I know that I am a sinner and that Jesus is the Savior. Come into my heart,

Lord Jesus; forgive me of my sins. Amen."

The women and children continued to fill their jars with the water from the well. Then they began their long treks on dusty, winding paths back to their villages and grass huts.

They had arrived at the well thirsty in body and spirit. Now the Karamojong carried back with them jugs of fresh water — and a taste of the "living water" that Southern Baptist International Mission Board work is all about.

(Richmond Times-Dispatch religion editor Alberta Lindsey contributed to this article.)

Internet provides CGSP material

Christian Growth Study Plan (CGSP) transcripts and church master list are now available on the Internet from the Baptist Sunday School Board, according to Morlee Maynard, ministry coordinator.

The CGSP is designed to assist churches with a systematic approach to leadership, skill development, and Christian growth. Currently 440,983 people representing 22,780 churches participate in the program.

According to Maynard, the new report request system became available in the Internet at www.bssb.com/cgsp on Nov. 1. Log-on identification and personal identification numbers (PIN), provided by the CGSP, are required to access the system. Both were provided to churches during October.

"This new avenue for receiving information eliminates waiting time for annual reports," Maynard said.

To request an individual transcript, a person can contact their church. To request a personal identification number (PIN) an individual can call the CGSP office at (615) 251-2525.

Looking back

10 years ago

Reacting to turmoil at Southeastern Seminary, the moderate Southern Baptist Alliance votes to study a new seminary in the Southeast. The Alliance task force is headed by Mahan Siler, pastor of Pullen Memorial Church, Raleigh, NC, and will report to the Alliance board on January 11, 1988.

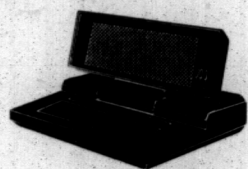
20 years ago

Three Mississippi church media centers are awarded distinguished recognition from the Baptist Sunday School Board's church library department for work done in 1977. The churches are First Church, Coldwater; First Church, Hazlehurst; and First Church, Rosedale.

50 years ago

Beaumont Church, Beaumont, experiences a genuine revival when Percy Ray, Home Mission Board evangelist, conducts services. Music is directed by pastor. There are 69 professions of faith, and others continue to come into the fellowship since the conclusion of the special services.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



**William H.
Perkins Jr.**
Editor

EDITOR
William H. Perkins Jr.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Carl M. White

EDITORIAL ASSOCIATE
Florence Larrimore

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Renee Walley

BOOKKEEPER
Betty Anne Bailey

LAYOUT/DESIGN
Joylin Davis

ADVERTISING/PROOFREADER
Debbie Sills

EDITORS EMERITI
Don McGregor
Guy Henderson

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Bettye Coward, Clinton;
Vickie Ford, Olive Branch;
Larry Garner, Jackson;
Bill Hardin, Picayune;
Gary Richardson, West Point;
Ernest Sadler, Pascagoula;
Debbie Sills, secretary.

Postmaster: Send changes of address
to **THE BAPTIST RECORD**, P.O. Box
530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Send
news, communication, and address
changes to **The Editor, BAPTIST
RECORD**, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS
39205-0530 (601) 968-3800

VOLUME 121 NUMBER 44
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$8.35 per
year payable in advance. Economy plans
available for cooperating Mississippi
churches. Periodicals postage paid at
Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State
Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items —
one calendar week prior to requested pub-
lication date. Advertising — two calendar
weeks prior to requested publication date.

Living up to Lottie's legacy

Charlotte Diggs Moon was born into the rarified Virginia aristocracy at her family's Albermarle County estate on Dec. 17, 1840.

She died a pauper's death 72 years later, thousands of miles from home and a lifetime away from her privileged early life.

Those are the cold, textbook facts. We all have a beginning and an end on this earth, but it's what we do in between that counts for eternity.

"Lottie," as she came to be called, understood that.

Although she was raised with cultural and educational advantages far above the standards of the day, Lottie Moon was a disaffected student and scornful of religion.

A bright young woman given to mischief and pranks, it appeared she was headed for a life of casual dissipation.

All that changed in 1858, however, when God moved in her life and she accepted Christ as Lord and Savior while attending First Church, Charlottesville, Va.

God moved again in her life in 1873, when she requested and against all odds received her missionary appointment from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) — one of the first single women chosen for Southern Baptist missionary service.

Lottie set sail for China in September of that year and by December had settled in the northern town of Tengchow, where she lived for the next 40 years.

She devoted herself to evangelistic work among the women and children of the surrounding area, telling all who would listen about the "true God," giving away books, and teaching those who couldn't read the books.

Lottie was rejected many times and earned the nickname of "Devil Old Woman," but her persistence never faded.

She wrote to her friends in the United States, "I wish I had a thousand lives that I might give them to the women of China!"

Lottie's love for the Bible and for the Chinese people became legendary in the villages around Tengchow, and opposition to her work eventually faded.

Then one day as she moved among the people with Bible in hand, she heard someone refer to her as "The Heavenly Book Visitor." The name stuck with the villagers.

In Lottie's day, China suffered almost constant internal political and military turmoil, with outside powers also attempting to exert their influence.

Still, Lottie fervently continued her work.

Civil strife at one point prompted the American consul to gather U.S. citizens to the city of Chefoo for protection, but Lottie refused to leave her beloved people in Tengchow.

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, fought over control of the Chinese province of Manchuria and other parts of China, ignited a famine that soon spread through the countryside and foreshadowed fateful events to come in Lottie's life.

Lottie begged the FMB for money to buy food for the starving Chinese, but the board was in debt and had no money to send.

Desperate to help the people around whom God had called her to build her life and ministry, Lottie withdrew her personal savings and used it to feed the hungry.

When that money ran out, she used virtually all her meager salary to buy food for others — often failing to retain enough for herself.

She collapsed five days before her seventy-second birthday, her health broken and her frail, 4'11" frame nearly decimated. Years of personal sacrifice had taken its toll.

Lottie died of starvation on Christmas Eve 1912, in the harbor of Kobe, Japan, on a ship that was taking her to America. Her body was cremated according to Japanese law and the ashes were returned to Virginia.

There were no parades or posthumous award ceremonies for Lottie. No White

URANUS HAS ALL
THESE LITTLE MOONS—
ARIEL, UMBRIEL, TITANIA,
AND MIRANDA! IF THERE'S
JUSTICE IN THE UNIVERSE
THEY'LL FIND ONE
NAMED LOTTIE!



House dinner was ever held in her honor.

The world took little note of her life and death, but she changed China and Southern Baptists forever.

Many sad events have transpired in Lottie's China since she came home, but God will yet prevail in that nation of soft-spoken, humble people.

A marble gravestone in a small Virginia cemetery carries Lottie's name, as does the greatest foreign missions offering in Christianity.

On that gravestone is this simple phrase: "Faithful unto death."

God permit that those words, bought at so great a price by the Heavenly Book Visitor, should also mark our own Christian service.

Reprinted by request from the Dec. 5, 1996 issue of The Baptist Record.

GUEST OPINION:



Late-breaking news

By Wallace Dabbs, member
First Church, Canton

The grizzled old editor scratched his beard as he looked around the news room.

It was late at night and as usual, only he and one young employee who had been recently hired to work on the newspaper were there.

He thought of the day he had first started to work at the Bethlehem Times — young and eager like the young man who sat at the table across the room.

His career had been fulfilling, but the continued censorship by the Romans had hindered his ability to write the news as he saw it.

Perhaps it was time to start seriously thinking about retiring. At his age, a few years just sitting in the sun and visiting relatives in Jerusalem was tempting.

Suddenly three young men, apparently shepherds judging from their dress, bolted through the door "We've seen the angel of the Lord!" The taller of the trio announced breathlessly. "It was awesome and those songs coming from the heavens were out of this world!"

"What in Moses' name are these peasants talking about?" the old editor wondered.

"We have come to give you a

news story about what we saw and heard in the fields," one said.

"Well, go on," the old editor said as he motioned for the young scribe to come over and hear this tale.

"Angels of the Lord appeared and said that a king would be born right here in Bethlehem," the younger said. "They sang songs and predicted peace on earth and good will toward men. They said we would find the king child lying in a manger."

"What total nonsense!" The old editor thought to himself as he quickly ushered them out.

He had barely settled at his desk when three men in colorful and flowing robes walked in.

They were seeking a particular inn with a stable. They said they had traveled from afar

seeking the Christ child and had followed his star to Bethlehem.

"What are all these people talking about?" the old editor thought to himself. "A king being born in a stable? Has everybody lost their senses?"

"What a night!" The old editor thought. "Too much wine is being drunk in this town."

However, he pondered that the prophets had written about a Savior who would be sent to save his people and establish his kingdom. Ridding the country of the detestable Romans was a pleasant thought.

Maybe he should send the young scribe out to look for that inn with a stable and perhaps encounter the group which had just left. A little checking would not hurt.

The front door flung open and someone from the street shouted:

"A wine wagon has turned over at the corner of Jericho and Galilee. Wine is running all over the street and a man is trapped beneath a wheel!"

The old editor summoned the young scribe. "Go do a story on the wine accident," the old editor said. "A story like this will have real repercussions on the town's economy, especially since the grape crop has not been good this year."

Eagerly the young scribe rushed to the door. Suddenly he stopped and looked at the old editor.

"What about that story of someone being born in a manger who is supposed to be a king?" he asked.

"Never mind that. The wine story is more important," the old editor said.

After all, he reasoned to himself, most of the people in town tonight are from Nazareth.

Everybody knows that nothing good ever comes out of Nazareth.

Dabbs has served as editor of several Mississippi newspapers.

Youth Evangelism Conf. set Dec. 29-30

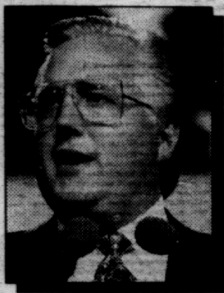
Over 3,000 students and their leaders are expected for the 1997 Youth Evangelism Conference Dec. 29-30 in A. E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton, according to Don Lum, youth consultant in the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBCB).

"The Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference has a two-fold purpose: First, to encourage our students in their walk with Jesus Christ, and secondly, to challenge them to share their faith with their classmates," Lum said.

Registration opens at noon on Dec. 29, with the first session starting at 2 p.m. The final session ends at 3 p.m. on Dec. 30.

Dwight "Ike" Reighard, senior pastor of Northstar Church, Kennesaw, Ga., will keynote the general sessions as well as provide leadership for a number of breakout sessions.

NewSong, one of the most popular groups in contemporary Christian music, will be in concert during the conference's



Reighard



Dec. 29 evening session. A collection of five Christian musicians based in Atlanta, NewSong has enjoyed ten number-one hits, including "My Heart is Already There," and "We Wear His Name." Their current album, "Love Revolution," is a tribute to the abundant life found in Christ.



NewSong

Hattiesburg native Reggie Smith and his wife Ladye Love will lead worship music for each general session. The Nashville-based Smiths recently returned from Northern Ireland, where they filmed a special gospel video with William McRae, a member of the British Parliament and a popular singer in his home country.

Ventriloquist Dennis Lee of Dallas will perform with the 20-puppet "Nana Puddin' Bunch." Lee won the competition at the 12th Annual Ventriloquist Convention and was also given a special originality award for his unique performance.

"We are anticipating an awesome conference. Ike Reighard, Reggie Smith, Dennis Lee, and NewSong are anointed communicators of the gospel to students," Lum said.

"I believe that we as ministers of youth should take every opportunity to put our students in places where they can be challenged to share their faith with others and grow personal-

ly in their walk with Christ," he pointed out.

The conference cost is \$5 per person. Overnight accommodations and meals are not included. A complementary breakfast on the morning of Dec. 30 will be provided by MC for all participants who pre-register by Dec. 17.

Groups may register at the conference, but will not be able to attend the MC breakfast. Pre-registered groups may pick up breakfast tickets and prepared packets on the day of the conference.



Smith



THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST Record

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

DECEMBER 11, 1997

VOL. 121

No. 44

For more information and to pre-register, contact Don Lum, MBCB Evangelism Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Dennis Lee

Miss. CP nearing goals

Through November, Mississippi Baptists in 1997 have given a total of \$23,557,771 to the Mississippi Cooperative Program, according to Bill Causey, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the funds.

That amount is within \$587,315 of the total 1997 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget of \$24,145,086 — with nearly a month left in the year.

If giving from the 2,000 participating Southern Baptist churches in the state continues in December along the same patterns as previous years, about \$1.4 million will go toward the challenge portion of the budget.

The challenge portion sends 50% to Christian higher education; 20% to foreign missions; 10% to home missions, and 20% to Mississippi missions.

After the basic budget is met, "every penny goes to missions and Christian education," said Causey.

November giving totaled \$1,625,620, which is \$206,052 less than that given in November of 1996. However, giving for the first 11 months of the year is up \$1,109,690, or 4.94%, over giving for the same period of 1996.

SBC CP takes Nov. dip

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for November dropped more than \$2 million from the same month a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For November 1997, CP receipts were \$11,869,780 compared to November 1996 of \$13,934,056, a drop of \$2,064,275 or 14.81%.

For the two months (October and November) of the SBC fiscal year, CP receipts totaled \$25,045,808 compared to the same period a year ago of \$26,249,173, a decline of \$1,203,365 or 4.58%.

Designated gifts were up more than 26% during November. The November total of \$3,082,127 compared to the same month a year ago of \$2,434,287, an increase of \$647,839 or 26.61%. For designated gifts year to date, \$5,046,606 has been received compared to last year's total of \$4,150,180, an increase of \$896,425 or 21.6%.

For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the monthly requirement is \$12,348,756, thus the November 1997 total was \$478,975 short of the required figure or 3.88%. For the budget year to date, receipts total \$348,295 more than the two-month required figure, or a 1.41% increase.

WWJD bracelets going over big with youth

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP) — What would Jesus do? Would he wear a bracelet to remind him to do the right thing?

Bracelets with the initials WWJD are sweeping the nation. To some wearers they are a fad or a trendy fashion statement. To others they are a witnessing tool and a testimony of Christian commitment.

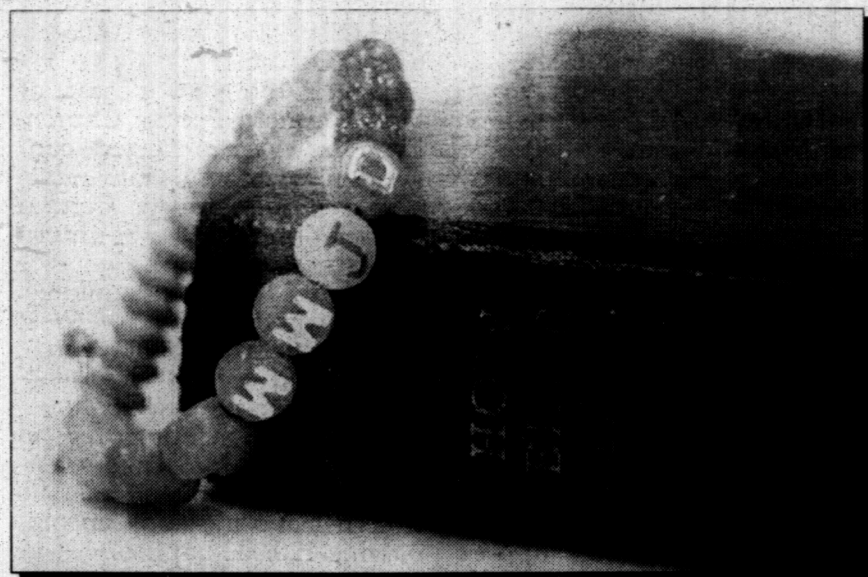
The bracelets are distributed to about 4,000 Christian bookstores across the country, according to Mike Freestone, a salesman with Lesco Corporation in Michigan, who designed the first bracelets. Cost of the cloth bands is usually below \$2.

In addition to the popular wristbands, WWJD products include mugs, T-shirts and sweatshirts, necklaces, key rings, fish- and heart-shaped

lapel pins, Bible covers, plaques, pencils, highlighters, fanny packs, backpacks, bumper stickers, shoelaces, a WWJD book that lists different situations and tells what Jesus would do, and a CD with selections by Big Tent Revival, Geoff Moore and the Distance, Rebecca St. James, Steven Curtis Chapman and 10 other artists. A free bracelet comes with the purchase of a CD.

The company also now produces beaded wristbands and silver bracelets with engraved WWJD initials in addition to the cloth bands.

"A lot of our kids have them and a lot of our adults have gone to wearing them now," observed Doug Goetzinger, minister of youth at Cherokee Hills Church, Oklahoma City.



"They are kind of an identifying mark, somewhat like the old cross necklaces," he said.

Scott Davis, youth minister at First Church, Hobart, Okla., said one of his youth sponsors felt the Lord wanted her to get bracelets for each of the kids in the youth group.

"I would say about one-third of them are wearing the bracelets," Davis said. "I would love for the bracelets to be used for their purpose instead of just a fashion statement, but, if I were being honest, I think it is more fashion than a true witness."

However, at Calvary Church, Tulsa, Okla., students are starting to witness to students who are wearing the bracelets, "because they don't know if they are Christians or not," explained youth minister Scott Watkins.

"Some of the kids in the schools in our area are saying the WWJD stands for 'Why Waste Jack Daniels?' You never know what people are going to think the initials mean."

Goetzinger said he wears one of the wristbands. "It's impacted me, even in ministry situations," he admitted.

"If I'm getting tired or having a bad day, it reminds me of what Jesus would do in ministering to this student. It's like going that extra mile," he said.

The idea for the bracelets came from a youth group at Calvary Reform Church in Holland, Mich., who had studied the classic Christian novel "In His Steps." The book asks the question, What would Jesus do?

The group contacted Freestone, whose company in Lansing produces promotional items.

"We happened to have the bracelets available and it was easy to put the initials on them," Freestone said. "It fit price-wise with what the church wanted, was a durable message and something that would appeal to kids."

The bracelets, first produced in 1989, caught on, the company received referrals and for two years has been distributing them to Christian bookstores.

As of (October) we have 19 million bracelets, 4 million just this year," Freestone said.

WWJD pitches battle with ads

By Tim Nicholas
MBCB Communication Director

The first in a series of ads placed in Jackson's The Clarion-Ledger newspaper sports section by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board asks simply, "WWJD?"

These letters adorn woven bracelets on the wrists of millions of Christian teenagers, prompting them and others who read the message to consider, "What Would Jesus Do?"

The newspaper ads, which will run for 14 weeks at a cost of about \$3,500, are being aimed first at younger readers of the sports section.

The idea for the ads came from Grant Arinder, pastor of First Church, Belzoni, who wrote a guest opinion article in The Baptist Record on Sept. 11.

Complaining about ads in the Clarion-Ledger's sports section for sexually-oriented

businesses, Arinder suggested that Baptists ought to buy space next to these ads.

Arinder said his irritation was made worse when the sports editor announced he was committing more space to high school athletics. That, he said, placed ads for "adult sexually-oriented businesses in the same section that targets high school readers."

The Church Information Support Team of the convention board staff took up Arinder's challenge and bought the ads.

In about a week, the telephone number of Life Enrichment Services at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson will be listed in the ads. Those lines in the ads will read, "Need Help? Call Life Enrichment Services at 1-800-378-7613."

Callers will be connected to someone who can direct them to appropriate counseling.

Ads just before Christmas will ask, "Looking for Peace?" During Christmas week, the ads will state, "Peace Has Come!"

WWJD?

'Aunt Lucille' puts Beacon atop missions gifts

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

"Aunt Lucille" Carter was, to say the least, frugal. Family members recalled after the 91-year old Petal woman's death on April 1, 1995, how she squeezed her electric and gas bills by using window air conditioners sparingly in the summer and space heaters on low setting in the winter.

Aunt Lucille, a charter member of Beacon Church, Hattiesburg, did her own yard work and drove a well-maintained 1962 Chevrolet — which was still in good enough shape to hand down to her great-nephew when she died last year.

She considered her personal finances so private that even niece Kathy Boyd of Brandon, the executor of her will, and other close relatives didn't know the small fortune she amassed through penny-pinching and savvy investments.

It therefore came as a complete surprise to everyone when Boyd opened Aunt Lucille's will and discovered she had left over \$200,000 to the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions, to be given through Beacon Church.

The Lottie Moon Offering, administered

by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) in Richmond, Va., is used to support more than 4,000 Southern Baptist missionaries around the world.

A special service was held June 9 at Beacon Church to commemorate Aunt Lucille and the lifetime of material sacrifices that enabled such a remarkable gift.

"Her life was so interwoven with honoring him (Jesus). Thirty percent of the people in the world don't have access to the gospel, but there is good news—God is at work," said Mississippi native Lewis Myers, a former foreign missionary currently serving as FMB vice-president for World "A".

Myers attended the service with FMB treasurer Carl Johnson. Johnson noted that Carter's gift is sufficient to support a missionary couple overseas for 12 years.

Boyd applauded Beacon Church members for providing a spiritual home for her twice-widowed aunt, who had no children.

"Aunt Lucille loved you, and you returned her love. Her family wants to say 'thank you.' We know that her bequeath goes out with the love of this church," Boyd said.

Keith Manuel, Beacon church pastor, noted that Carter was instrumental in the

church's development from the beginning, and she always focused on missions.

"This gift is characteristic of the way she lived her life and how much she loved the Lord," he said.

Reprinted from the July 25, 1996 issue of The Baptist Record.

HELP!

THEIR CRY OUR CALL

Lottie Moon Christmas
Offering for
International Missions
Goal: \$100,000,000

1996 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

(per member giving)

1. Beacon, Hattiesburg	\$1052.44
2. Myrtle, Myrtle	467.46
3. Pace, Pace	126.06
4. First, Brookhaven	114.92
5. Kewanee, Toomsoba	109.64
6. First, Coldwater	82.89
7. Mt Moriah, Bruce	71.48
8. First, Columbus	53.16
9. First, Mendenhall	51.33
10. Oak Grove, Lake	49.90

Source: Annual Church Profiles

State conventions convene around country

ARIZONA

Church's recovery from arson celebrated at convention

TUCSON, Ariz. (BP) — For the first time since 1988, the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting was held outside the Phoenix area — at First Southern Baptist Church, Tucson.

The church experienced an arson-caused fire in February 1996 that left standing only the exterior walls of the sanctuary and fellowship hall. The rebuilt, remodeled facility is visible testimony that God can bring good from bad, speakers said.

Demonstrating their support for missions beyond the state's borders, messengers adopted a basic budget that increases from 19% to 20% the amount of Cooperative Program funds sent to Southern Baptist Convention ministries in North America and internationally.

The 1998 Arizona Cooperative Program goal is \$3,121,817, with a basic budget of \$2,838,016, a 1.79 percent increase over 1997, and an advance budget of \$283,801. The first \$120,000 received under the advance budget is allocated for "Portraits," Arizona Southern Baptists' new publication that replaced the "Baptist Beacon." Eighteen per-

cent of the amount received after the \$120,000 is reached is allocated for SBC causes.

David Johnson, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Phoenix, was re-elected convention president. Bill Agee, executive director of Central Association of Southern Baptists, was elected first vice president, the lone nominee. Bret Burnett, pastor of West Yuma Southern Baptist Church, was elected second vice president in a two-nominee ballot.

The annual meeting drew an estimated 450 messengers representing the convention's 396 churches and missions, encompassing 120,000 Baptists.

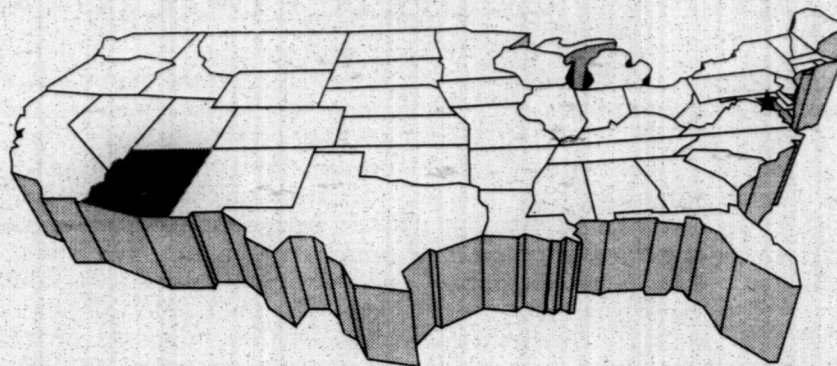
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Messengers vote to align with Progressive National Baptists

WASHINGTON (BP) — The District of Columbia Baptist Convention voted overwhelmingly to align itself with the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., during its Nov. 17-18 annual meeting at First Church, Washington.

The Progressive National Baptist Convention encompasses more than 1,400 predominantly African American churches.

The 47,000-member D.C. Baptist Convention has been



linked with the Southern Baptist Convention and American Baptist Churches since its inception. This decision makes the DCBC the only Baptist body in the Southern/American Baptist orb to become triply aligned.

In other business, by the D.C. convention's 200 delegates, a 1998 budget of \$1,374,481 was adopted, a 16%

increase over the current year.

Gifts to the SBC Cooperative Program and to ABC/USA United Missions will increase by 2% of budget, for a total of 33% of all undesignated monies going to national and international missions and ministries — the fourth consecutive year for increasing its missions giving by 2% of budget.

Executive Comm. approves new Central Hills building

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee, in their organizational meeting Dec. 2 at the Baptist Building in Jackson, approved expenditure of up to \$69,000 for materials for a new building at Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko.

The planned 80 x 60 foot building will provide meeting space, showers, and a laundry for those using a recreational vehicle (RV) facility.

The entire project is being built by the state Campers on Mission organization.

Already, Campers on Mission have provided about \$34,000 plus labor for preparing the site for the RV facility.

The building will be available for other Baptist usage besides RVs and, like the rest of the Central Hills facility, will be owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

The expenditure will come from the board's operating fund.

In other business, the Executive Committee re-elected

two of its present officers to second-year terms.

Robert Upchurch, member of Calvary Church, Tupelo, was re-elected chairman. Sue Dockery, member of Broadmoor Church, Jackson, was re-elected secretary. Dan Robertson, pastor of West Heights Church, Pontotoc, was elected vice-chair.

Miss. choirs to sing at Bellingrath

Bellingrath Gardens and Home in Theodore, Ala., is hosting Mississippi Night on Dec. 20 that will include a number of Mississippi Baptist choirs in concert. The special night is part of the 65-acre facility's "Magic Christmas in Lights" celebration that includes millions of lights, Santa's Workshop, a Fontinini Nativity scene, and the Bellingrath winter gardens. The event will be 5-9:30 p.m. each night through New Year's Eve. For more information and admission prices, call (334) 973-2217.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

I'm in love with a minister of another denomination, and they don't believe what Southern Baptists believe. I care deeply for him but I want to do the will of God. What actions should I take?

Marrying a man who (a) does not believe that Jesus died for his sins, (b) has not repented of his sins, and (c) isn't willing to accept God's free gift of salvation through his Son, should be of greater concern than denominational differences. Scripture admonishes us not to be unevenly yoked (2 Cor. 6:14), but that refers to a Christian marrying a non-Christian. Whenever two people decide to join together, they need to work out their differences. Couples should take an honest look at all aspects of their relationship before saying, "I do." Talk candidly with him about your religious beliefs, and insist that he talk openly about his beliefs. You must determine whether the differences can be worked out. The time to do so is now — not after the wedding. It won't get any easier than it is right now.

My fiancé is a Christian who doesn't seem concerned that his three children don't attend church. I am concerned for their salvation, and also about their father's attitude. How should I handle this?

When building a relationship, always look at the picture from all angles and be alert to "red flags" that can reveal problems. This man's attitude toward his children is certainly a red flag. If he is truly unconcerned for his children's faith and salvation, how concerned can he be about other important issues such as morality, values, and commitment? If he has little concern for his children, how much concern will he have for you after the wedding? These are hard questions, but you must be honest with yourself. Pray for God's wisdom and bring these matters up for discussion. Search for a solution. If these problems are not solvable, then it is up to you to make the decision whether you can live with them for the whole of your married life.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



ELECTED — New officers of the Executive Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board are (from left) Dan Robertson, Pontotoc, vice chairman; Robert Upchurch, Tupelo, chairman; and Sue Dockery, Jackson, secretary. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

BR announces holiday schedule

The Baptist Record will not publish on Christmas Day, Thursday, Dec. 25. The next issue of the newspaper will be dated Thursday, Jan. 1. Due to the New Year's Day federal holiday, postal delivery of the Jan. 1 issue will be delayed.

Because of holiday schedules, deadline for news articles to appear in the Jan. 1 and Jan. 8 issues is Thursday, Dec. 18. Deadline for advertisements to appear in the Jan. 1 and Jan. 8 issues is Thursday, Dec. 11.

For churches that publish special pages, any information that must appear before the Jan. 1 issue should be included in the Dec. 18 issue. Church special pages for the Jan. 1 issue must arrive at Cain Lithographers no later than 12 noon on Tuesday, Dec. 30.

For more information, contact The Baptist Record at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. Church special page users should directly contact Cain Lithographers at (601) 981-4700.

Saints quarterback offers NOBTS testimony

By Linda Joyce Zygiel
New Orleans Seminary

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — "When the Lion of Judah sweeps us off our feet, all we have is the cross of Christ," said Danny Wuerffel, quarterback for the New Orleans Saints football team, during a Dec. 2 chapel service at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS).

Winner of the 1996 Heisman as college football's top player, Wuerffel frequently has been in the spotlight over the past two years, using the visibility to share his love for Christ.

Kneeling in prayer with teammates before and after games and thanking God for every touchdown are among the ways he lets fans know his accolades go to God.

Wuerffel often speaks to groups of college students through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

As he thought about delivering a message at a seminary, a place where ministers are trained, he said, "I was going to come in here and bang on some things and be a prophet," like the prophets of the Old Testament who criticized the religious leaders of their day.

"I wanted to be this impressive speaker, but instead God wants me to be humble so you can see him," Wuerffel said.

Having considered talking about Isaiah 29:13, "They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me," and the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector in Luke 18:9-14, Wuerffel said God humbled him when he began to pray for an illustration to tie his thoughts together.

As Wuerffel prayed, "my eyes were open," he said. "I

saw) I wasn't the tax collector. I was the Pharisee."

He said he originally planned to ask, "Where is our security — in faith and God, or in justification by comparison or competition with others as ministers?"

He said his security could be based in the many abilities and blessings God has given him, and he could look "at other guys on my team, justifying myself by comparison."

However, the true test of humility, he said, is this: How do you act when someone treats you that way? He realized he didn't like it when veteran New Orleans Saints players treated him, a rookie, in ways that made him feel humiliated.

After praying through what he would say in the NOBTS chapel service, "I felt like Job and wanted to say, 'My ears have heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes,'" as stated in Job 42:5-6.

"The experience was pretty humbling," he said. "I felt like my feet were kicked out from underneath me."

Like a lion drags his prey into the wilderness, Wuerffel said, "God was dragging me to the Lamb of God who died for my sins."

As he faced his own sins, "the healing, nurturing love of God poured out on me. I relearned the gospel and how much God is just in love with me." He said he wanted to be like the Apostle Paul, who was going to boast only in the cross of Christ and like the Apostle John who wanted only to be known as the one Jesus loves.

Recruited last spring as quarterback for New Orleans' NFL team, the Saints, Wuerffel



AMONG FRIENDS — New Orleans Saints quarterback Danny Wuerffel (second from right) preached to ministers at New Orleans Baptist Seminary Dec. 2. Following the sermon he stood for a picture with fellow Univ. of Fla. alumni Thorn and Wanda Lear and their children Richard, Joshua and Jonathan. Thorn has served as director of grounds at NOBTS since 1992. Wanda works in the NOBTS business office. (NOBTS photo by Eric Grizzle)

said, "There are a lot of guys on the team who are broken and unhappy. There's a great ministry there."

"What I've come to love about New Orleans is the people. The more I have been here and seen, the more it's grown on me. I've learned to love it more each day," he said.

Featured in a Nov. 2 article in New Orleans' Times-Picayune, Wuerffel is reported to have "ordered Bibles for teammates, passed out religious literature and started a group responsible for reading Scripture daily, with more than half the team's 53-man roster participating."

Wuerffel distinguished himself on the football field during his college years at the

University of Florida in Gainesville.

A journalism and public relations major, Wuerffel maintained a high grade-point average and actively participated in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Winner of numerous awards and honors, Wuerffel was the only quarterback in NCAA division 1-A history to rank in the top four in all career passing categories: passing efficiency, percentage of passing touchdowns, passing yards per attempt, touchdown passes, passing yards per completion, ratio of TD passes per interception, ratio of average completions per TD pass, and ratio of average attempts per TD pass.

Mississippian Myers to head IMB regional effort

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Mississippian Lewis I. Myers Jr., a Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) vice president who helped engineer early efforts to target people closed off from the gospel, has been named interim regional leader for Central and Southern Asia.

Myers, 64, will temporarily assume duties formerly assigned to Mark Morris. Morris, 39, announced his resignation as regional leader Nov. 22, citing an intention to help develop an independent new missions initiative.

The region encompasses 17 nations and 1.5 billion people in 1,504 distinct people groups. More than 200 IMB personnel are assigned there. Many of them, including Morris, worked with Cooperative Services International until April, when the board reassigned all overseas work to 14 new regional leadership teams. Morris was named a regional leader then.

Myers was appointed a missionary to Vietnam with his wife, Toni, in 1960. Later, as director of consultant services for the board from 1980-85, he oversaw the board's earliest efforts to team up with Southern Baptists who were sharing the gospel behind closed political borders.

In 1985 he was named to lead CSI when it was organized as an arm of the IMB to spread the gospel where traditional missionaries were unwelcome.

As developing technology allowed researchers to perfect methods of tracking world peoples, CSI became a model for reaching The Last Frontier — people groups with little or no access to the gospel usually because of political or religious barriers to the West.

Myers was named regional vice president for CSI in 1987. In 1994 he became vice president for World A strategies, helping to develop plans to keep missionaries and Southern Baptists focused on reaching The Last Frontier.

IMB researchers have classified 721 people groups in Central and Southern Asia as part of The Last Frontier. During the next three to five years, IMB missionaries plan to develop a witness among 300 of them, said Kenn Shirley, the Richmond, Va.-based associate regional leader for IMB work there.

While IMB trustees look for a permanent regional leader, Myers intends the regional team to keep "pushing against lostness on multiple fronts in the region,"

he said. "We have no inclination to take a care-taking stance. We desire for this period to be characterized by advance."

Last year the region reported 467 new churches. In a letter to missionaries, Myers told them to expect continued growth due to heightened prayer for the region as Southern Baptists began their annual Week of Prayer for International Missions Nov. 30.

"The region is on the minds of our constituents," he said. "What a unique time for us to capitalize on that energy with our collective commitment to advance."

"Among Muslims, Hindus, animists and secularists, God is at work in Central and Southern Asia."

Still, the task is enormous. Among countries boasting the largest Muslim populations, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan rank No. 2, 3 and 4. (Indonesia, in another IMB region, is No. 1.) India also claims the largest contingent of Hindus, and Nepal is the world's only Hindu state.

Iran and Turkey exert enormous influence throughout the region, especially in the central Asian republics, which are working to sort out their national identities after 70 years under the Soviet Union umbrella, Myers said.

HELP!

THEIR CRY OUR CALL

Lottie Moon Christmas
Offering for
International Missions
Goal: \$100,000,000

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 11, 1997

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.



1998 CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCES

"Keeping your church OUT of court"



PURPOSE: To provide information on how churches can carefully conduct their affairs under county, state and national laws and do so in a manner that provides some legal insulation from lawsuits.

TARGET AUDIENCE: church business administrators, church staff, personnel committee members, finance committee members, church trustees, legal professionals dealing with issues concerning liabilities of churches and non-profit organizations.

REGISTRATION FEE: \$35 (includes 154-page notebook)

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS: William R. Korb, Jr., Sheila L. Korb, Michael V. Bourland, all attorneys with Bourland, Smith, Wall & Wenzel law firm in Fort Worth, Texas, and general counsel to Tarrant Baptist Association, Inc. and trust and estate counsel to Baylor University; William Townsend, assistant dean of the Mississippi College School of Law.

March 27-28, 1998
First Baptist Church, Richland

Special Guest:
"Face to Face"
drama group

This year there will be a special Youth Ministry Lab for all youth leaders and youth ministers during the festival. The brochure with conference descriptions and registration information will be out in January. Please call the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651 to be put on the mailing list.



WILLIAM KORB



SHEILA KORB

JANUARY 22, 1998
Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson
787 E. Northside Drive

JANUARY 23, 1998
Calvary Baptist Church, Tupelo
501 West Main Street

Sponsored by:

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries
and Church-Minister Relations and Annuity
Departments
of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
Mississippi Baptist
Christian Action Commission
Metro Baptist Association, Jackson
Lee Baptist Association, Tupelo



MICHAEL BOURLAND

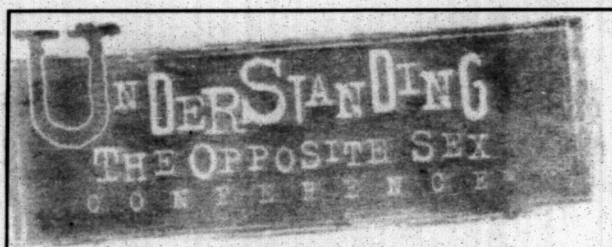
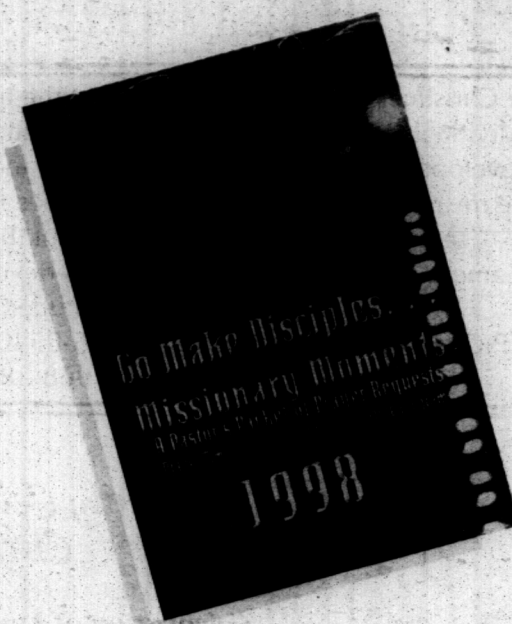


WILLIAM TOWNSEND

Deacon Ministry Emphasis 1998

January 11-18, 1998

For other projects and information, contact:
Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department
Matt Buckles, consultant
P O Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530
(601)968-3800, extension 3907, or 1-800-748-1651



Featuring:

Dick Purnell
Executive Director, Single Life
Resources

Conference Information:

February 7, 1998
9 a.m.-2 p.m.
First Baptist Church, Jackson

Conference Cost:

\$22 (includes lunch)

Registration Deadline:

February 2

A Singles Conference
co-sponsored by the
Discipleship & Family Ministry
Department.

For more information, call
First Baptist Church, Jackson
at 949-1906.

MISSIONARY MOMENTS

have proven to be a simple, but effective way of promoting the Cooperative Program week by week in many churches. They contain short prayer guides featuring over 100

Southern Baptist missionaries working through the ministries of the Cooperative Program. Often, churches use them as a way of enriching the offertory during worship services. You may obtain a copy for your church by calling the Stewardship Department at 1-800-748-1651.

Family's Legacy of Love Family Week Gulfshore Baptist Assembly July 4-8, 1998

Featuring: Debbie & Jeff McElroy



There will be conferences for the whole family and all ages, so make plans to attend this wonderful opportunity for quality family time in the Lord. Also, there will be a barbeque supper, fellowships and much more!

Women's Evangelism Conference

February 6-7, 1998

6 p.m. Friday registration-noon Saturday

\$20 per person

Woodland Hills Baptist Church, Jackson

Don't miss hearing the new national women's evangelism consultant from the North American Mission Board, Jaye Martin. Workshops include How to Keep Your Children from the Occult, Lifestyle Evangelism, and Event Evangelism. For more information, call the WMU office at 1-800-748-1651.

A Look Ahead 1998

Listed below are some of the major events being sponsored by WMU in the first few months of 1998. Be sure to put these on your calendar.

- Jan. 24 GA/Acteens Campus Day
William Carey College, 3-7 p.m.
- Feb. 6-7 Women's Evangelism
Conference, Jackson
Friday, 6 p.m.-Saturday, noon
- Feb. 8-14 Focus on WMU Week
- Feb. 21 GA/Acteens Campus Day
Mississippi College, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Mar. 1-8 Week of Prayer for Home Missions
(NAMB)
- Mar. 16-17 WMU Annual Meeting
FBC, Hattiesburg
Monday, 1 p.m.-Tuesday, noon
- Mar. 20-21 GA Mother/Daughter Overnight
Camp Garaywa, GAs grades 1-6
- Apr. 17-18 GA Father/Daughter Overnight
Camp Garaywa, GAs grades 1-6

Family Celebration of Christmas

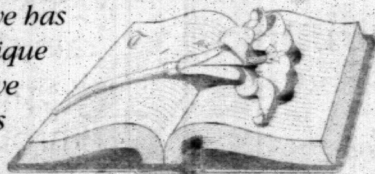
The Christmas season is an important time in the life of the Church and the individual Christian. The Family Celebration of Christmas plan has been developed in an effort to assist families and churches in focusing on the true meaning of Christmas. We hope these will enrich your family as you seek to keep Christ at the center of the Christmas celebration. Camera-ready copies of each week's devotional are available from the Department of Student Work at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530 or call 800/748-1651 or in Jackson, 968-3800.



Family Celebration of Christmas

Celebration of Love - The Week Before Christmas

Love means many things to many people. Love is interpreted differently at different ages. Every age can understand that "God is Love." Love is being responsible for one's own actions. Love is doing something thoughtful for another family member or a friend. Love has many expressions. But God's love is unique and different. From God we learn to love with "agape" love, or a selfless love. This selfless love was perfectly demonstrated through God's gift of his son, Jesus. If using a wreath, light the fourth candle representing "God's love." This candle should be purple. There should now be three purple candles and one pink candle lit.



Read: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud." 1 Corinthians 13:4

Additional Readings:

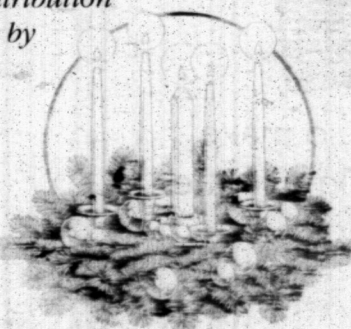
Old Testament: Isaiah 9:6

New Testament: Matthew 1:22-23

Suggested Family Activities:

Think together about the family times of celebration and worship of the past few weeks. Explain that the end of this season of anticipation is really a beginning of a new year of celebrating hope, peace, joy and love, all special gifts from God which have come to us through the birth of his son, Jesus. Hold hands together and make a commitment to strengthen the family with the help of each family member's contribution of love for each other. This could be done by individual sharing or by a prayer.

Sing: "Away in a Manger"
"Jingle Bells"



The correct time for
Area 1 Keyboard Festival at
Colonial Hills Baptist Church, Southaven,
is 9:30 a.m.-Noon
on Saturday, January 31, 1998.

BAPTIST MEN'S DAY TO BE OBSERVED ON JANUARY 25, 1998

Churches across our state will conduct a Men's Ministry Day Celebration on January 25, 1998. The emphasis will be giftedness and servanthood. Our purpose is to help men understand and celebrate their giftedness and call to Christian servanthood.



The Apostle Paul wrote the Corinthians that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal...But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him...but God hath tempered the body together...(1 Corinthians 12:18,24) Peter emphasized the same truth in this way: "As every man hath received the gifts so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)

God has given to every Christian certain gifts called spiritual gifts or more accurately, gifts of grace. These gifts equip us to do ministry that He has given to the church. Every believer has a gift or gifts and every believer is a minister. Knowing one's gifts and the places they can be used increases our effectiveness as ministers in and through the body of Christ.

Men's Ministry Day Celebration is an opportunity to help men celebrate their giftedness and to make a commitment to ministry.

The Brotherhood Department has developed a suggested program for this day. It is being mailed to church Brotherhood directors, and Associational Brotherhood directors. If you desire a copy please call the Brotherhood Department at 1-800-748-1651.

It is apparent that God is sending a wake-up call to men in our state and in our nation. We desire that men be sensitive to His leadership in their lives as we seek to become more godly in our nature.

FEBRUARY

3-84 MR. DAVID J. COLLINS
c/o ACS Suriname, P. O. Box 02-5567, Miami, FL 33102-5567
Parents: Charles & Suzanne, General Evangelism, SERVE IN SURINAME

4-85 MR. DAVID M. JOHNSTON
First Baptist Church, 425 Ford, Columbia, MS 39429
Parents: Vincent & Sharon, Conference/Encampment, SERVE IN EQUATORIAL BRAZIL

5-75 MISS SHARON PARKER
William Carey College, P. O. Box 1353, Hattiesburg, MS 39401
Parents: Ronnie & Beth, Music Promotion, SERVE IN BRAZIL

7-85 MR. ADRIAN G. MARTIN
Casilla de Correo 5, 8400 San Carlos de Bariloche, ARGENTINA
Parents: Asbury & Hope, General Evangelism

8-97 MISS MARIANNA MOSS
Strada Darwin #3, 1900 Timisoara, ROMANIA
Parents: Clay & Vicky, Volunteer Coordinator

10-84 MISS LINDSAY N. HEARN
22361 Highway 436, Bogalusa, LA 70427-1327
Parents: James & Brenda, General Evangelism, SERVE IN TOGO

15-81 MR. AARON G. MASSEY
Bolanos 141, 1407 Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA
Parents: Gregory & Karen, Music Promotion

15-79 MISS DEEANN BOOTH
233 Stonecastle Drive, Brandon, MS 39042-8072
Parents: Jim & Edith Ann, Language Pastor (Deaf)

21-90 William Hutchinson
CP 801, Bissau, Guinea, WEST AFRICA
Parents: Michael & Lynn, Church Planters



Pray this day for...

December 12, 1997 - January 15, 1998

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

The Intercessor God Seeks

"Amid all the discussions as to what can be done to interest young and old to the study of God's Word, or to awaken love for the services of His houses, one hears little of the indispensable necessity of the power of the Holy Spirit in the ministry and the membership of the Church. One sees few signs of the conviction and confession that is needed, and all this is due to the lack of prayer. The workings of the Spirit are so feeble, and that only by united fervent prayer a change can be brought about." Andrew Murray

Pray for three sports players in Gaza/West Bank who are attending a Bible study. One of them is close to making a decision for Christ.

14

*See below.

21

*See below.

28

Pray for the Sojourn Academy of the Spanish Language Institute in San Jose, Costa Rica, and for missionary Barb Carter, Director. Pray that new teachers needed by January 1998 will be provided.

Ask God to provide the personnel and resources to enable the Bible to be translated into the Khmu language. There are 500,000 Khmu in Laos.

Many activities are being planned for students in Macau during the next three months related to Christmas and the Chinese New Year. Pray that missionaries Steve and Miranda Baker and ISC workers Brad and Becky Dace and Betty Siu will be able to plan activities that will attract their students to attend.

Pray for a new Christian in Australia who is being persecuted by her family for refusing to participate in the non-Christian funeral rituals that were part of her mother's funeral. Ask the Lord to comfort her in the grief and loneliness she is feeling.

*See below.

29

Pray for a pastor and his wife who serve in Bungoma, Kenya. They live in two rooms without indoor plumbing, but this godly couple are raising six nieces and nephews who parents have died, in addition to their own four children. Give thanks to God for Kenyan pastors who are poor by worldly standards but rich in the things of God.

The Alaska Baptist Convention and the Russian Far East have recently formed a new partnership. Pray for a spirit of understanding and unity as these groups work together.

The Southern Baptist dorm at Faith Academy in the Philippines, where high school MKs (missionary kids) attend boarding school, presently is being run by interim dorm parents. Pray for wise and godly dorm parents who can come on a long-term basis to meet this critical need.

Pray for brokenness, confession and freedom of forgiveness for all Rwandan believers in Rwanda, and especially for those in denominational leadership.

For the Youth Evangelism Conference; Mississippi College; 2 pm, 29-3 pm, 30th sponsored by the Evangelism Department.

Give thanks to God for more than 270 International Mission Board personnel who have obeyed God's call to share the gospel with the 445 million people living in Southeast Asia and Oceania.

Pray for agricultural missionary Don Bolls in Niger as he begins a busy season of distributing seeds and digging wells to help meet the urgent physical needs caused by a lack of rainfall and a poor millet harvest.

Pray that we will have a heart for the hungry in the world as we promote foreign missions this month. More people have died from hunger in the past five years than in all the wars, revolutions and murders in the world in the last 150 years.

With a population of almost 75 million people, less than 1 percent are Christian in Vietnam. Pray that God's Spirit will bring the Vietnamese people to Himself.

Pray that our missionaries in Ghana will have wisdom in administering quality health care in an impoverished culture amidst ever-increasing medical costs.

Pray for physical strength for our missionaries in Ghana as they face frequent bouts of malaria. It is one of the biggest obstacles they face and can be discouraging at work and at home.

There are two Baptist seminaries and seven Bible colleges in Nigeria. For those needing additional administrators and faculty, pray that the Lord will lead them to the men and women He has prepared.

Please continue to pray for the Rose Hill Mission in Grenada, Windward Islands, to find land suitable for a building. In spite of all the problems they have been having at their current location, attendance at the worship services continues to grow.

Christmas Day - Pray that Christmas will truly be the season of "Peace on earth and good will toward all," and that Christians everywhere will celebrate with great joy the coming of Christ to earth.

New Year's Day - Pray that we Christians will make a resolution to become more Christlike during 1998.

Please pray for a young believer in Mali who has accepted Christ but is suffering extreme persecution from his family. He is presently separated from his wife and child. Pray for him as he seeks to serve the Lord and know His will.

Pray for missionary Dan McLaughlin as he works to prepare a mass choir for the Franklin Graham Crusade being held in Peru next March. Pray for organization and coordination among choir directors, for the selection of music, and for places to be available to rehearse the choir, which may well reach 2,000 in size.

There is a desperate need for 180,000 children's coats to help North Koreans make it through the harsh winter. Working in cooperation with Woman's Missionary Union and Baptist Men, these coats need to be gathered by Dec. 15, and they then will be taken to North Korea in time to give to children there on Christmas. Please pray for this effort.

The Baptist Record has the third largest subscribers list (102,000) of any Baptist state paper in the nation. Pray for its ministry, William Perkins the editor, and all who make its publication possible.

13

Give thanks to God for a growing group of new believers in a northern village of Laos. Pray that they will grow in their understanding of and obedience to Christ's teachings.

Phil Langley is director of New Church Extension, California Baptist Convention, Fresno, Ca. There were 157 new churches started this past year. Currently in Ca. there is one Southern Baptist Church for every 22,000 people. Pray that Phil will have wisdom in the use of limited funds for church starts.

The church, as an organization, in Japan is small and relatively young. Pray that God will raise up a mature Japanese laity with a heart for multiplying discipleship ministries.

Please ask God to send rains to the islands of Sumatra and Borneo in Indonesia that will put out fires in forests, cultivated fields so that farmers can cultivate their fields.

Please pray that the gospel will continue to spread across Russia and that evangelical work will continue growing stronger despite potential hindrances from the new law on religion.

Praise the Lord that the Baptist seminary and publication center in Lebanon, which was in a water shortage crisis in October, struck a gushing flow of good water when they recently drilled a new well.

27

Cecil Mahendranath is a national missionary in Washington, D.C. Pray for him as he witnesses to two families in two different embassies. Pray for the 167 nations that he works with daily.

The work in the Litoral Association, Argentina, has progressed with the help of ISC workers Bill and Marjorie Graves, who served there until October, and Charles and Indy Whitten, who are serving there till April. Give thanks to God for each of these families and for missionaries Rick and Kris Kunz who will arrive in December.

*Due to space limitations, the following prayer requests were placed outside of the calendar.

Dec. 21 On the evening of Nov. 18, a criminal broke into the home of a South African family who attends Calvary BC in Taipei, Taiwan. The father and a 22-year-old daughter were accidentally shot when police stormed the house. The wife, a 12-year-old daughter, and a 6-month-old Chinese baby were held hostage until the next day. While the family was being held they prayed together. The Chinese papers reported that this made a definite impression on the criminal. Pray that God will use their testimony to draw many unbelievers to Christ, and especially the Chinese man who had taken them hostage.

Dec. 28 In February you probably prayed for a young man from China who went to Vienna, Austria, to work. In April, he accepted Jesus as Savior. Initially, he struggled with the idea of baptism because he was a registered Communist, but in May he was baptized. He returned to China soon after that. Later he wrote a missionary: "I went to Vienna for the U.S. dollar, but God gave me the most beautiful and valuable gift in the world through you all."

Dec. 29 In mid-October, six Buddhist monks visited the genocide monument at the infamous "killing fields" outside Phnom Penh, Cambodia. While there, they met a Christian who told them about Jesus and the eternal life He offers to all who follow Him. The monks invited their new friend to visit the temple where they lived to teach them more about Jesus. Pray that in subsequent meetings, these monks will understand the gospel and commit themselves in faith to Christ.

The Office of Communication would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a wonderful and joyous holiday season.

HOUSE TOPS

What can God accomplish through prayer?

By Dean Register, President
Mississippi Baptist Convention

the hearts of his people. Whatever we may accomplish is directly attributable to God working through our prayers.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention is a testimony of the power of prayer. Evangelist Dwight L. Moody once said, "Behind every work of God you will always find some kneeling form."

Hundreds of adults and students throughout our state are discovering the necessity of prayer. The "kneeling forms" are evident.

No person is ever so tall as when he kneels before God, and never so great as when he humbles himself before God. The

one who kneels to God can stand up to anything.

his people, the first thing he does is start them praying."

The promise from God's word is clear: "Call upon me and I will answer you, and I will show you great and mighty things." (Jer. 33:3)

What are you praying about that is bigger than you? Are you asking God for great things or trivial things? Certainly he is interested in all the little things that bother us, but we must occa-

sionally move from asking God to take care of the things that break our hearts, to pray-

do through one state convention completely devoted to him. By his strength let us resolve to be that convention.

Let us magnify his name! May we share the gospel throughout every community, county, and city in our entire state.

May the Lord grant us courage to stand up for his cause; compassion to care for his people; and commitment to remain faithful until we have finished the work he gave us. Therefore, pray!

Register, pastor of Temple Church, Hattiesburg, was elected Oct. 28 to his first term as Mississippi Baptist Convention president.



Register

JUST FOR THE RECORD



RAs of Lollars Grove Church, Eupora, were recognized during a ceremony held on Nov. 9. Each one received a membership card, pin, and vest for various services and memorization work. Pictured (from left, front row) are Chris Williams, Brad Winfield, Lee Allen Kendricks; (back row) Doug Smith, John Thompson, and Leigh Welch. Not pictured were Samuel Jackson and Dustin Carter, and their leaders, Mike and Dorothy Rogers.

Fairhaven Church, Olive Branch, will present its Christmas program, "Behold That Star" on Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m. 13, 3:30 and 6 p.m.; and Dec. 14, 3:30 and 6 p.m. Call (601) 925-6452 for complimentary ticket information.

A Story of the Real Meaning of Christmas will be presented at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton. The dates and times are Dec. 12, 7 p.m.; Dec.

The Word Is Alive!, directed by Mike Harland, will be presented at Broadmoor Church, Jackson, Dec. 13 and 14 at 5 p.m. each night. Jim Futral is pastor.

Algoma Church, Algoma, will have its sixth annual Drive-Thru Nativity on Dec. 19 and 20, from 6-9:30 p.m. It consists of five scenes associated



First Church, Terry, recently held a Recognition Service for its GAs. Pictured (from left, bottom row) are Brittany Vanoy, Rachael Thompson, Rebecca Johns; (second row) Kathy Brisendine, Claire Ivers, Sarah Little, Misty Jones; (third row) Christina Reese, Heather Holder, Brandi Warren, Emalee Bell; (fourth row) Katie Little, Shelly Ivers, Stacey Alford, and Allison Bell.

with the birth of Jesus. For more information, call (601) 489-5846.

Pleasant Grove Church, Brookhaven, will present its Christmas Cantata, "Behold that Star," featuring the adult choir and youth group on Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. Kent Cochran is pastor.

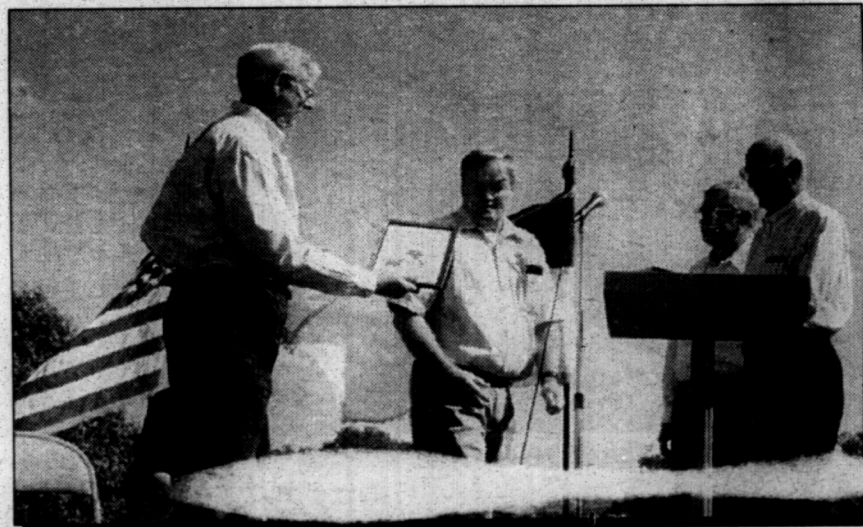
Christmas Fantasia, created by Greg Nelson and David Hamilton, will be presented at First Church, Isola, on Dec. 12 at 11 a.m. The Christmas cantata will be under the direction of Marsha DePriest, music director. Gary Reichenbach is pastor.

CHURCH PEWS & FURNITURE CO.



★ Cushions ★ Baptisries
★ Steeples ★ Renovation
★ Pews and Pulpit
Furniture
(New and Used)
Wallace E. Foy

**WATTS 1-800-898-0551
Jackson 957-3762**



Vaiden Church, Vaiden, held dedication services on Oct. 12 for 106.7 acres of land donated by M. E. Brewer and Hayes Branscome, partners in Branscome and Brewer Realtors in Grenada. "The concept for the land is to build a family life center where families can come and get away from life's every day routine," said Leon Holly, pastor of Vaiden Church. Holly said that plans could change, but future plans include a lodge with 150-seats to be used as a fellowship facility, an open air pavilion for meetings and singings, and eventually cabins. Pictured are Holly, Billy Joe Ferguson, chairman of deacons, Branscome, and Brewer.

Call for Free BROCHURE

BAPTISTRIES
HEATERS, PUMPS
FACTORY DIRECT
TOLL FREE NATIONWIDE
1-800-251-0579
FIBERGLASS BAPTISTRY CO.
3511 HIXSON PIKE • CHATTANOOGA, TN 37415

Everlasting Life



God intends for all his children to live with him forever, but the road to everlasting life is blocked. To find that road you must:

Admit that you are a sinner.
There is none righteous, not even one. (Rom. 3:10)

Accept God's love for you.
God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)

Acknowledge Christ as Lord.
If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.

Are your seniors tired of crawling over the HUMP? The solution is a 15-passenger van with an aisle, raised roof & electric step.
Call Tri-State Van & Bus Today! 1-800-330-3622
BUSES! VANS! PEOPLE MOVERS!

Experience the Nativity LIVE

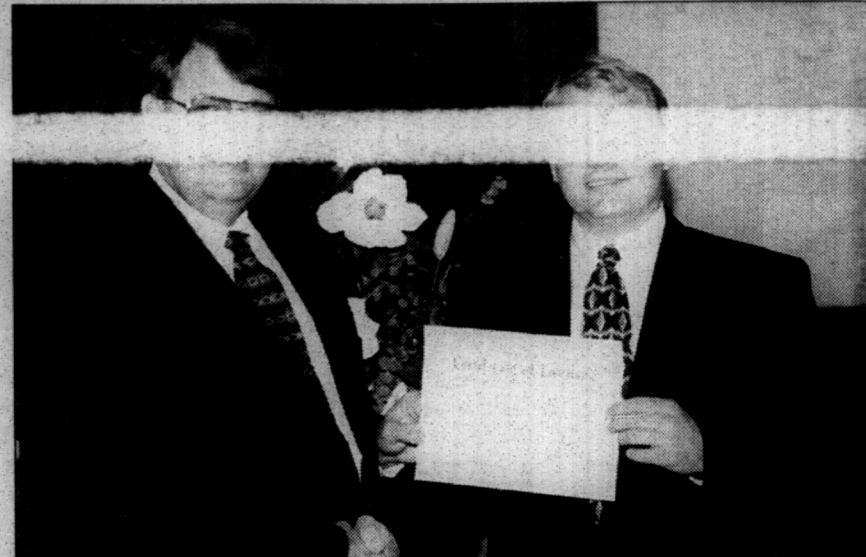


December 12th & 13th, 6:30pm until 8:30pm
Country Woods Baptist Church, 6737 Siwell Road, 371-7955

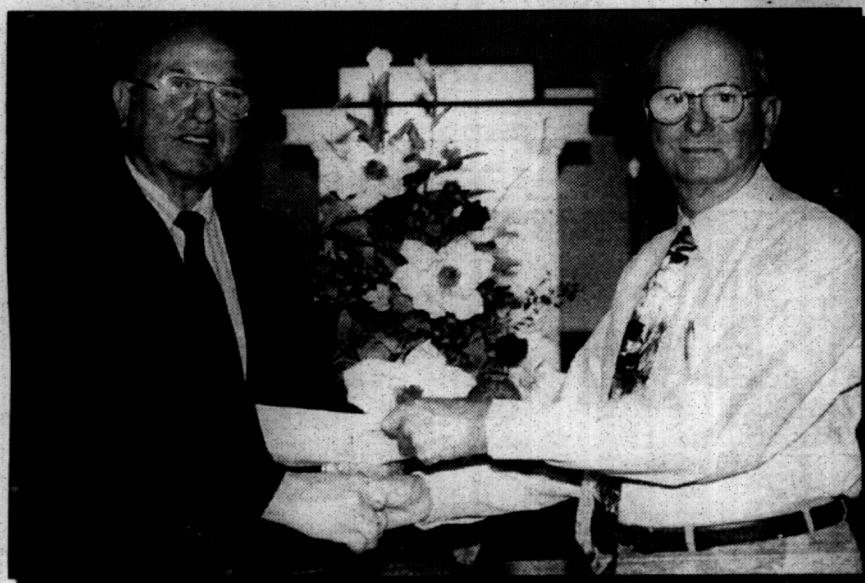
NAMES IN THE NEWS



New Prospect Church, Iuka, licensed **Jesse Massey** to the gospel ministry on Oct. 8. Pictured (from left) are Doug Christy, pastor; Massey; and Ronny Stricklen, deacon chairman. Massey is now serving as interim pastor at South Crossroads Church, Tishomingo County.



Lane Kelly was licensed to the ministry on Nov. 2 by Old Union Church, Shannon. Kelly is available for pulpit supply and may be contacted at (601) 844-3985. Pictured with Kelly is his father, **Kenneth Kelly**, pastor of Old Union Church.



Bill Spruell (left) received a Certificate of 49 years of perfect attendance in Sunday School by **Frank Odom** (right) associate Sunday School director. Spruell is a member of Wade Church, Jackson County. Bill Barton is pastor of Wade Church.

Ruby Swann (above) was presented a special recognition certificate on Nov. 16 for 32 years of Sunday School attendance. Presenting the award to Swann (pictured) are **Ben Griffin**, pastor, and **Lawson McClellan**, Sunday School director.

Wesley Pitts, a Mississippi native, now director of missions, Cumberland Association in Tennessee, has been named the 1977 "Seminary Extension Center Director of the Year" for east of the Mississippi. Pitts was born and raised at Pontotoc and is a

graduate of Clarke College and Mississippi College. Early in his ministry he was pastor of First Church, Prairie. Seminary Extension, with offices in Nashville, Tenn., is a ministry of the Council of Seminary Presidents.

Courses are made available in a classroom setting at more than 400 Extension Centers across the country — 17 in Mississippi — to students who for some reason are unable to attend a seminary.



Pitts



Scott Jarrett, a freshman business student at Hinds Community College (HCC), is the 1997-98 recipient for the Eddie Cooper Memorial Scholarship awarded through the HCC Development Foundation. He is the son of **Tommy Jarrett**, pastor of Raymond Church, Raymond. Jarrett is pictured with **Clyde Muse**, president of HCC.



Conehatta Church, Newton County, held ordination services on Nov. 9 for five deacons and one for the ministry. Ordained were (front row, from left) **Lloyd Seal**, **Mark Engram**, minister; **Shannon Hedrick**; **Layne McDill**; **Chad Morrow**; (back row) **Roy Seal** and **Bob Smith**, pastor.

VINYL SIDING
NO DOWN PAYMENT - 100% FINANCING
SAVE NOW
• ROOFING
• ROOM ADDITION
• BATH-DEN
• KITCHEN
• CARPORT
SENIOR CITIZENS DISCOUNT
as low as **\$50** Per Mo. W.A.C.
CALL 1-888-373-0054
PAY-less Home Improvements

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATE: 50 cents per word, \$5 minimum. Cash with order except with contract advertisers. Include name, address, zip code, and phone number in word count. No blind ads. Only written ads accepted.

ACCEPTING RESUMES: Part-time Education and Out-Reach Director. Send to: Ingalls Ave. Baptist Church, PO Box 358, Pascagoula, MS 39568-0358.

RESUMES ARE BEING ACCEPTED by Green Valley Baptist Church of Henderson, Nevada for a Senior Pastor and a Minister of Music by Jan. 15, 1998. Send resumes to Mike Farnham, Chairman of Senior Pastor Search Committee or Larry Reynolds, Chairman of Music Pastor Search Committee, 270 N. Valle Verde Dr. Henderson, NV 89014.

NEEDED: Part-time or Bi-vocational Music Director. Send resumes to Yale Street Baptist Church PO Box 816, Cleveland, MS 38732.

PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN'S MINISTER wanted for Village Baptist Church in Oklahoma City. Masters degree from seminary preferred. Will consider full-time experience in lieu of Masters. Send resume to S. Taylor, 10600 N. May Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73120.

PART TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC: Woodland Baptist church ATTN: Loren Meeder 3033 Ridge Road, Columbus, MS 39701. Tel: (601) 327-6689

PART TIME OR BIVOCATIONAL Youth Minister wanted: First Baptist Church, Crystal

Springs, MS. Send resume to Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, Crystal Springs, MS 39059. Phone (601) 892-1149.

CENTRAL FLORIDA BAPTIST CHURCH seeking Minister of Youth/Youth Music. Send resumes and work samples (bulletins, calendars, brochures, etc.) to K. Carr, 135 E. Goodheart, Lake Mary, Florida 32746.

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS for Minister of Music and Youth. Send resumes to Cold Springs Baptist Church, Route 2 Box 42, Collins, MS 39428. Phone (601) 765-4363.

CHOIR ROBES & accessories, pulpit/judicial robes, paraments. **MURPHY ROBES/ Mac's** Robes, Charles McGlocklin, Authorized Dealer. Statewide 1-800-898-MACS.

10 DAY BEST OF ISRAEL and full day London Tour **\$1799.00** Personally escorted by experienced Staff. Call for dates and details. 1-800-853-5337. Group Rates Available.

NOTCH ESTATES-BRANSON, MO. Condo, 1 mile west of Silver Dollar City, 2BR, 2BA, sleeps 6. Stay 3 nights, 4th free; or 4 nights, 5th free. Free continental breakfast. \$95 daily. (SPECIAL OFFER) Golden Anniversaries—4 nights at \$95, 2 free nights plus gift. Other specials available. (601) 746-4632.

PERSONAL CARE/ASSISTED LIVING Available in Private upscale home. 24 hours — 7 day full service administered by owner-operator with 30 years medical experience. Information by your inspection visit and private interview. Call for appointment, Edwards, MS (601) 852-2010.

YOUTH OUTINGS? Paintball-games! Other functions! Curry Creek Outdoors. (601) 722-9000.

CFI — PEWS, NEW & used. Baptistries, steeples, & stained glass, MS & ALA. 1-800-830-0583.

FOR SALE: Professional Chalk Talk Outfit in excellent condition. \$500. Call James Buie at 372-8208 day or 924-4690 night.

PASSENGER VANS FOR private and church groups. From \$59.95 per day/limited free miles/7 to 15-seat. Occasionally for sale: quality used vans. Auto & Truck Rental, Jackson (601) 948-3391. Since 1965.

HEIDELBERG STAINED GLASS, Meridian. Design, Fabrication, Repair. **MURPHY ROBE SALES.** Call (601) 483-7958 or 1-800-368-2705.

FIRST ALERT SECURITY Systems installed Scott-free (Scott Alarm Co.) Call Jane (601) 355-3733.

CHURCH BUSES

#1 MANUFACTURER
COMPETITIVE PRICING

SOUTHEASTERN BUS CO.

CLINTON, MS

1-800-423-9826

1-601-924-1982

ALL SIZES
SALES AND RENTALS

BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS



Milfred Valentine, William Carey College dean of the Winters School of Music; **Larry Kennedy**, interim president; **Gene Winters**, associate professor of music; and **James B. McWethy**, McWethy Family Foundation representative, attend the ribbon cutting ceremony of a new listening lab. McWethy, a former graduate school roommate of Winters, approached the school about funding a project for the music unit which could serve as a memorial to Winters' parents, Donald and Frances Winters, founders of the Winters School of Music.

William Carey College honored Sarah Gray Emerson Burrus of Hattiesburg with the Distinguished Alumna Award at Homecoming ceremonies held recently on campus. Burrus, who



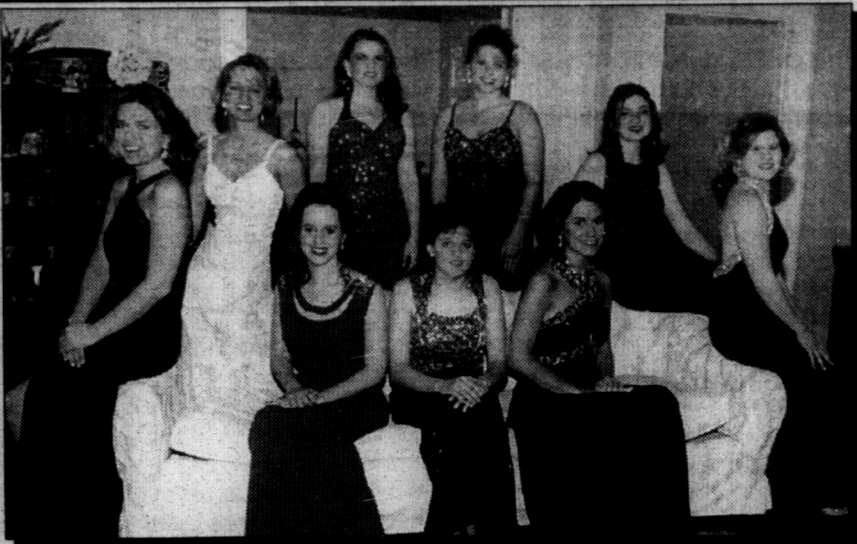
Burrus

has the longest tenure of any employee in the history of the college, will retire in December after 38 years of service.

William Carey College alumnus Martha Gillon Hutson, class of '70, was recently selected Mississippi's Teacher of the Year 1997-98. A resident of Clinton, Hutson currently teaches ninth grade Mississippi Studies and World Geography at Sumner Hill Junior High School where she serves as department chair. She is an adjunct professor at Mississippi College.

HOMEcomings

Steep Hollow, Poplarville: 89th anniversary; Dec. 14; 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall at noon; 1:30 p.m. singing; REVIVED from Picayune, guest singers; Larry D. Robertson, pastor.



William Carey College (WCC) presented the 1997 Homecoming Court at homecoming festivities held recently on campus. WCC's Homecoming Court is Queen Ginger Martin, Vicksburg (back row, left arm of couch); senior maids Patsy Meshay Lee of Carthage and Tangie Renee Moudy of Puckett; junior maids Laura Anne Dowdle of Brandon, and Kellie Marissa Dykes of Columbia; sophomore maids Jill Megan Asmussen of Ethel, La. and Alison Amanda Trammell of Florence; and freshman maids Jeannie Michelle Miller of Pensacola, Fla. and Holly DeAnna Norwood of Pelahatchie.

Revival results

First, Stonewall: Nov. 15-19; 10 professions of faith; Donnie Guy, Gulfport, evangelist; Bill Goble, Meridian, music; Mike Powell, pastor.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Highland Colony Church, Ridgeland, recently broke ground for a new 16,000 sq. ft. Christian Education Complex. The new education facility, scheduled for completion in the Spring of 1998, will provide space for the church's pre-school, children, and youth ministry areas along with an administration area. The church, organized in March of 1994, was given a grant by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which allowed them to purchase prime property on the Highland Colony Parkway. The 11,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose worship/education facility was erected in December, 1996. Pictured are Carl Savell, pastor; Bill Townsend; Stephanie Trusty; Ross Wheatley; Norman Perkins, building chairman; Richard Copeland, contractor; Amanda Adams; Cydney Perkins; Bil Dickinson; and J. L. Wann.

Steeple & Baptistries

From the world's largest manufacturer of fiberglass church products

Call or write for our free catalog

800-527-1456

PO Box 1340

Henderson, TX 75653-1340

FIBERGLASS SPECIALTIES INCORPORATED

How do you insure something that's priceless?

ASK A SPECIALIST.

Your church is far more than bricks and mortar. It represents the priceless commitment and sacrifice of many people. Church Mutual understands your church's enduring importance in the lives of your congregation. We've specialized in insuring churches for 100 years. Call for a free, personal evaluation of your insurance needs. Find out why more churches place their trust in Church Mutual.

In Mississippi, call 800-525-4359.

Church Mutual
THE SPECIALIST

© 1997 Church Mutual Insurance Company

Are you paying too much for your Hospital or Medicare Supplement Insurance? If yes, call for our Low Rates Today!

Major Hospital & Surgical Plan

Helps pay benefits for: Hospital Room, Intensive Care, Surgery, Ambulance.

Many Pre-Existing Health Conditions acceptable — High blood pressure, Diabetes, Heart conditions, etc. (Excellent Rates on ages 50+)

Medicare Supplement

Ages 65 and over. No waiting periods. Low Rates!

Prescription Savers Plan: Save up to 50% on prescription drugs!

Medicare Supplement under age 65

Call today for free information:

E.F. Hutton Insurance Marketing

PO Box 5127, Brandon, MS 39047

1-800-463-4348



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Correction

Due to a printer error on page 11 of the Dec. 4 issue, portions of the address listed to order The Baptist Children's Village "Memorable Meals" cookbook were omitted. The complete address is: The Baptist Children's Village, P.O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060-0027.

MISSES THE MARK

Editor:

Your "Editor's Notebook of Nov. 13, "Do the media promote evil?" misses the mark on so many levels that this former journalist must offer at least a brief rebuttal.

Quite simply, most of what's in The Clarion Ledger is aimed at serving its readers, not all of whom happen to be Southern Baptist. I never made a secret of my Christian beliefs when I worked in newsrooms for more than 20 years. Nor did I agree with every decision made around me. My guess is that David Petty — whom I have met but do not know personally — does not agree with all the "calls" made, mostly on the run, by his 100-plus employees, but he is in a position where he's able to offer crucial influence as an unapologetic Christian. I believe the Lord "calls" good Christian journalists to serve in the secular media as well as at publications such as The Baptist Record.

John 8:32 is equating Christ's love with truth in stating that "the truth shall set you free.11 But, as a Christian journalist, I've always liked to believe that Scripture applied as well to the truth-seeking ideals of journalism. David Petty and The Clarion-Ledger aren't perfect; there's always room for improvement when you're offering up a first draft of history. I do feel that he and his staff — even those who aren't Christians — are committed to such ideals.

Bill Sutley
Hattiesburg

IS GOD ABSOLUTE?

Editor:

I read with interest the article entitled "Baptists' Calvinism debate stirring anew" that was printed in the November 20th edition of The Baptist Record. Contrary to what was stated, I would suggest that the true question in the Calvinist/Armenian debate is not "Did Jesus die for everyone or for only a few?" Rather, the real issue is whether God is an absolute sovereign or not. Scripture teaches that "our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased" (Psalm II 5:3). Likewise, "none can stay His hand" (Daniel 4:35), and He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Ephesians 1:11). To deny that God does "whatsoever He hath pleased" and that "none can stay His hand" with respect to salvation is a denial that Jehovah is an absolute sovereign. For a better discussion of God's absolute sovereignty, may I suggest a book entitled The Sovereignty of God by Arthur W. Pink.

I likewise wanted to clarify the nature of the Southern Baptist Founders Conference that was also mentioned in that November 20th article. The

conference is an annual meeting of Southern Baptists where various theological topics are discussed. The theme for the last conference was "Reformation and Revival." The conference has been held the last several years at Samford University in Birmingham. For those who are interested, simply write: Southern Baptist Founders Conference, 8250 Littleton Road, N. Fort Myers, FL 33903.

Troy Hurdle
Water Valley

THE MIDDLE APPROACH

Editor:

In reference to the article "Baptists' Calvinism debate stirring anew" in the November 20 issue of the Baptist Record, I have a few supporting comments.

Historically, the logical consequence of untempered classical Calvinism is the eventual imbalance between man's choice and God's divine right. This imbalance produces the philosophical offspring known as "fatalism." In other words, man, to some degree, is a pawn of God. Worst yet, this shift away from a scriptural balance between the two entities leads to the reasonable assumption that God ultimately is the creator and author of human sin. Clearly, these hyper positions are not biblically sound.

Conversely, the difficulty with Arminianism is the persistent rise of man's choice "over and beyond" the divine right of God. Thus, from this thought, God's sovereignty is questioned, and Pelagianism becomes inevitable. Simply put, a salvation based on works instead of grace becomes the standard.

Ingeniously, most Southern Baptist have accepted a thoroughly biblical and middle theological position between these two extremes. In general, Southern Baptists' understand the evangelical summons of a sovereign God, who chooses to place limits upon himself, as to not diminish the freedom of sinful man to accept or reject his divine call. This theological synthesis maintains the integrity of man's choice, the sovereignty of God's grace, and upholds the individual security of the believer.

For more than a century, this middle approach has been the heart of our statement of faith. Hopefully, we will have enough intelligence to keep it that way for years to come.

Andy Brasher, pastor
Como Church, Como

SKewed PRIORITIES

Editor:

The Nov. 13 issue of The Baptist Record provides a powerful illustration of the skewed priorities of our current denominational leadership.

Page 12 contains the story of

how a 35-year employee (a librarian) of Southern Seminary has been fired less than 10 months away from retirement simply because he wrote a personal letter to SBC President Tom Elliff.

Significantly, Elliff expresses no regret for the firing, though he apparently is distressed that the matter has become public knowledge. Did Tom Elliff ever learn The Golden Rule in Sunday School?

On page 10 of The Record this same SBC president (who greets us, so his letter says, in the wonderful name of Jesus) solicits recommendations for nominations he will make to four important SBC committees. There is a catch, of course. No one should trouble to recommend any brother or sister who does not subscribe to the creed of the "inerrant" Bible.

The message to Southern Baptists is crystal clear: To "get along" you must "go along" with the party line, whether as a denominational employee or as a prospective committee appointee. What you say you believe about the Bible carries considerably more weight than whether your personal actions are consistent with Biblical principles. See Mark 8:18.

Greg Snowden
Meridian

COMMENDS EDITORIAL

Editor:

On behalf of the Deacons, Staff, and membership of First Baptist, Bruce we commend you for your recent editorial concerning the co-ed dorm issue at Ole Miss. We appreciate your open and candid position on what we consider a vital moral issue.

Our church supports the ministry of The Baptist Record. We covet to pray for your continued leadership that provides

Christian coverage of the issues before us.

Charles E. Nestor, Pastor
First Church, Bruce

FREDERICKS IN U.S.

Editor:

Our greetings and love at this season in which we remember the coming of our Lord to bring us his salvation. Our church's choir and children's classes are preparing for their program as I am sure yours are also. Wayne and I are so excited as we think of our first trip to the States for Christmas during our 25 years of missionary service. Do pray that our Christmas trip will be a safe one and that our last months on the field will be fruitful in witnessing and ministry.

I have 3 Bible Study groups and a sewing group. I also meet twice monthly with a group at the center for Moslem to teach them a little sewing and witness as I can. We are studying 1 Peter this year.

There are those in the Céret also who need Christ as Saviour and Monique in the 3rd group needs to make Christ Lord of her life.

Please search to know the Lord's will concerning your part of the Christmas offering that supports one-half of our foreign missions budget.

We are so grateful for what you do to support us and make possible our being in France. May God bless you as you work with us here through your prayers and giving.

Florence & Wayne Frederick
25, rue Joseph Bocamy
66100 Perpignan, France
E-mail address: wayne.fredrick@wanadoo.fr

Editor's Note: The Fredericks are native Mississippians serving as International Mission Board missionaries.

Reflecting on Christ



The "Christmas on Reflection Lake" crew has completed preparations for the annual celebration of the life of Christ, which will be held this year at 7 p.m. nightly on Dec. 13-28 at Gilead Ministries Conference Center midway between Oxford and New Albany. Take Highway 30 from either Oxford or New Albany to County Road 244. Turn on CR 244 and follow the lighted signs about 3.5 miles to Gilead Ministries. There is no admission charge, although donations will be accepted. For more information, call (601) 224-8518.

LIFE AND WORK

God's missionary people

Matt. 5:14-16; 9:35-38; 28:18-20

By Don Lum

From the beginning of time and down through the ages, God has always had a plan and a purpose for his people. He has always used those who serve him to show the lost world that he loves them and wants to bless them. William Cary said it well, "God does have a way of reaching the lost world and we Christians are it."

In our lesson this week we will examine four things that God desires from his people. As you examine these scriptures remember this eternal principle...obedience always brings blessings.

God's Plan: Shine (Matt. 5:14-16). It was a night like so many others before it. The skies

were clear, the stars were shining, everything was peaceful and yet there was something unusual because on this night one star had a different look. It possessed a glow that had not been there before. Most people didn't notice but there were wise men in the east, men who studied the stars and they knew.

In our first passage today, Jesus said his followers would be lights pointing the way to him. Just like the wise men noticed the star because they studied the sky, people should notice something different about us as they study our life. This passage is a part of the sermon on the mount. Jesus set forth principles that set us



Lum

apart from the way the natural man acts - poor in spirit - meek - pure in heart. When God controls us, we are different and we will shine. The only explanation for our life will be him.

God's Plan: Pray (9:37-38). The next passage takes place after Jesus has been busy about the work he came to do. He is busy living among people and giving himself to them. When he looks at people, he feels compassion. He knows what they are missing. He wants them to experience life like they were made for.

You are probably involved in "crowds" everyday. If you work or shop or go to school you see them. Look at people the way Jesus does. See them as blind to the things of God and missing out on real life. Begin to pray that God will use you in your world to show people what it is to follow him and to tell them how to know

Jesus so they can follow him.

God's plan: Go. This is probably the second most quoted passage in the New Testament - Matt. 28:19-20, The Great Commission. It is a part of Jesus' last words to his disciples. Jesus says as we go about our lives, let it be our focus to "make disciples" of others - all nations - whomever we rub shoulders with. We have so many things to do in our busy American lives, but Satan has won if we neglect to walk with God and watch for ways to share Jesus everyday.

Some are called to "go" far away. But all are called to share as we go. I am called to share this week - you are too! We will make disciples as we live in front of others a life that points to God and tells them how they can have it too. Disciples are learners and followers. How can they follow if we don't share?

God's Plan: Give. The gift of giving is a characteristic of a

child of God. Just as God gave his son and as Jesus' life was characterized by his giving nature and ultimately the giving of his own life, so we are to give also. Giving of course for a Christian involves not only our financial resources but also our time and our talents.

Paul helps us in this passage (Phil. 4:14-16) to see our role in ministering to others. When we give we offer encouragement, when we give God uses those gifts to meet needs, and when we give we prove our love and commitment to Christ our Savior.

God's Plan: Shine - Pray - Go-Give. Do you remember when Christ came into your life, when you were changed on the inside? Christmas is a great time to reflect on where we are in our relationship to our Father through his Son, Jesus Christ. Do that this week as we see how God wants to use us to share.

Lum is a consultant in the Miss. Baptist Evangelism Dept.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Beginning to become

Gen. 28:10-22

By Edna Martin Ellison

*With my mind on other things,
Stumbling along one day,
I suddenly found the King of Kings
In an unexpected way.*

*Sometimes in a verse or a circumstance
He reaches out in love;
Through music or a knowing glance,
A voice, a touch from above.*

*Jesus is the ladder
To bridge God and humankind.
Salvation comes when we respond
With heart and soul and mind.*

From time to time we meet God in unexpected places. He initiates personal encounters with us because his all-encompassing love is always seeking

us, always reaching for us, always present with us.

Jacob found God in an unexpected place as he traveled to search for a suitable Hebrew wife. Genesis 28:10-15 records his encounter. He chose a campsite and lay down, using a rock for a pillow (v. 11). Then he dreamed that angels walked up and down a giant ladder, or stairway, that reached from earth to heaven (v. 12). Notice the interaction between heaven and earth. The angels assure us of God's involvement in human affairs.

Personal Encounter with God (28:13-15). For the first time God specifically told Jacob he had chosen him as the inheritor



Ellison

of the blessing and promise given to Abraham, Jacob's grandfather and to Isaac, Jacob's father. God said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac" (v. 13). Then he repeated the promise to the patriarchs: First, the promised land would belong to Jacob. "I will give you... the land on which you are lying" (v. 13). Second, God would give the land to Jacob's descendants (v. 13) and they would be numerous (v. 14). Third, all people on earth would be blessed through Jacob and his descendants (v. 14).

Finally, God promised his presence: "I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go... I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised" (v. 15).

Positive Response to God (vv. 16-22). Jacob stood in awe of

God's promise and his fantastic encounter with God (vv. 16-17). He felt he was standing on holy ground, "in the house of God," where he found the "gate of heaven" (v. 17). We always find the gateway open to God's presence when we encounter him.

Jacob's response was a solemn commitment to the Lord. He made his stone-pillow into an altar of worship, a monument to remind travelers of God's goodness. He poured oil on the rock as an anointing to dedicate the special place. Then Jacob took a sacred vow to walk in God's presence (vv. 20-21), to accept God as Lord (v. 21), to establish a place of worship (v. 22) and to tithe (v. 22).

Questions to Consider

1. When have you met God in an unexpected place or way? We can share our experiences with others and tell them the reality of our personal encounters.

2. Does God's promise to Jacob remind you of times he

has shown you his plan for your life? God always plans our salvation, and he will accomplish his will in our lives when we start by accepting him as Lord.

3. Have you made a positive response to God? Look at Jacob's responses and determine how you can respond to him in your circumstances.

4. Are you living for Christ daily? As seen in your worship attendance, your prayers, and your giving, are you demonstrating a daily walk with Jesus?

5. Do you have a vision for God's work in the world through you? As Jacob saw the angels ascending and descending, we can see his involvement in our affairs. A life dedicated to his service exhibits a missions focus as a Christian reaches out to the lost in the world. With Christmas approaching we turn our hearts to consider all peoples who need the love of the Savior.

Ellison is a consultant in the Miss. Woman's Missionary Union.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Growing in purity

I John 3:1-5; 9-18

By Debbie Sills

When God created man he created them in his image. One need only look in the mirror to see how sin has marred that perfect image. However, the shed blood of Jesus restored our fellowship with God and provided a way for our image to once again be perfect as God intended. As Christians, our goal is to become the person God intended for us to be. Sin will always be a part of man's life here on earth, but we can strive to live a life full of God's love and turn away from a lifestyle of sin.

Born to Become (3:1-3). In verses 1-2, John reminds us we

are called God's children. Much more than that, we are his children. His gift to us is his name. Two words in our vocabulary which are related but have different meanings are paternity and fatherhood. Paternity represents the relationship a father has with a child whose existence he is responsible for. On the other hand, fatherhood describes an intimate, loving relationship between father and child. This is our relationship with the heavenly Father. We are creatures of God by nature, but through his grace we become children of God. Actually, we are in the act



Sills

of becoming God's children. We have not yet reached the end of our journey. We are still in the process of becoming like God. The world sometimes has expectations of Christians that are unrealistic. Christians are not immune to sinning, they simply strive to be more like Christ than to be like the world. On the day when Christ returns and sin is abolished from our presence forever, we will be pure and perfect just like he is - just as God intended.

Born to be different (3:4-5, 9-10). No man is without sin. Even the most dedicated Christian sins from time to time. What John is referring to in these verses is a lifestyle of habitual sin. A Christian will not continue to live a life full of sinful habits without repentance. When Christ dwells in a person's heart, sin loses its hold

because God and sin can not dwell in the same place. This does not mean Christians are without sin. On the contrary, Christians do sin, but through Christ they can ask for forgiveness and be cleansed of that sin. God knows our weaknesses and what tempts us. He is interested in repentance and a conscious effort to turn away from a sinful lifestyle. He has called us to be different from the world. When non-Christians look at us, our lifestyle should be different from theirs.

Born to love (3:11-18). In these verses, John continues to explain the characteristics of one who really abides with God. He says one who loves his brother also loves God, but one who hates his brother does not love God. How do we know if we love our fellow man? Our actions prove our love to others. We are commanded to love others through our deeds not just

our words. When a person has a need, we as Christians need to be mindful of that need and try to fulfill it. Praying for someone is a wonderful start to helping others, but doing something tangible for them shows our love in a real way. People can use words to describe how they feel, but unless some kind of action substantiates those words, the words are meaningless.

Striving to become more like our heavenly Father requires us to follow Christ's example. He lived in purity and righteousness, always showing love and compassion to those around him. As we grow and mature in our walk with God, we too will take on his likeness. We will want to cling to righteousness and turn from our sin. The call to love with our deeds rather than just mere words should challenge each of us to meet other's needs.

Sills is advertising coordinator for The Baptist Record.

Miss. State BSU committed to excellence

STARKVILLE, Miss. (BP) — Between them, Ken Watkins and June Scoggins have more than 50 years of student work under their belts. In a ministry that can be physically, spiritually and emotionally demanding, that's an unusually long tenure.

How have they done it?

"Well, first of all, this is my calling," Watkins, director of the Baptist Student Union at Mississippi State University in Starkville, said, adding with a

white, and Jones, an African American, have become personal friends.

"These students need to see Greg and me as friends and they don't just need to hear him speak on race relations," Watkins said. "We've got to get where we don't see black and white. But if we don't start by developing relationships, it's not going to happen."

The BSU also boasts an active student missions program. In 1997, eight students served as summer missionaries and 23 went on short-term mission trips to Panama City Beach, Fla., and Honduras in Central America. The BSU's 1997 student missions offering goal is an ambitious \$15,000.

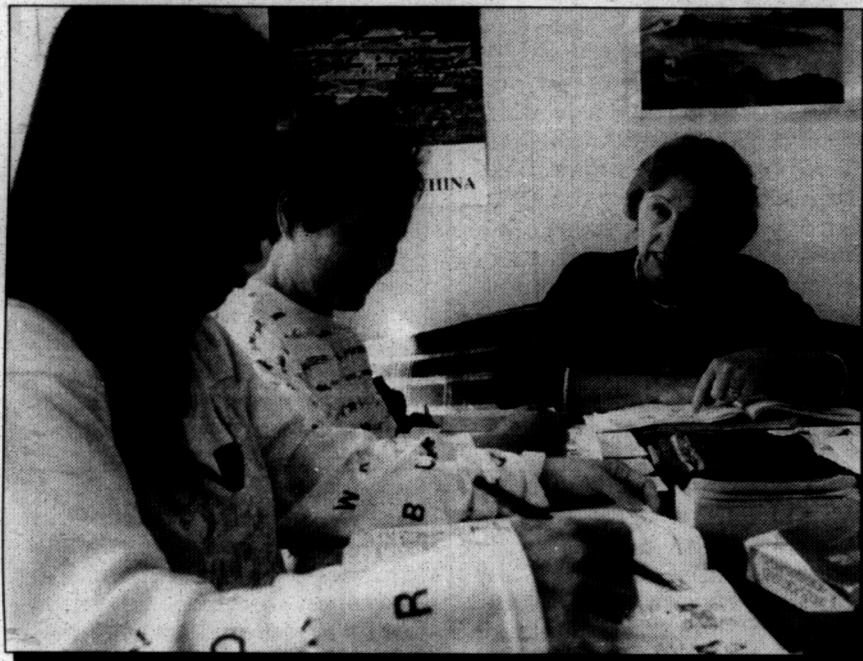
Other ministries of the MSU BSU include:

- ◆ weekly outreach at a local nursing home;
- ◆ occasional mission projects for Habitat for Humanity;
- ◆ teams of students who conduct "DiscipleNow" and other Bible study and discipleship retreats in area homes and churches;
- ◆ a campus-wide revival known as "Christival," which annually attracts more than 500 students.

The BSU has two major weekly meetings: "Priority," an evening of praise, worship, testimonies, Bible study and fel-



SPECIAL TOUCH — Ashley Wallace (second from right) enjoys a card game with a group of children at the Crossroads International Friendship House near the campus of Mississippi State University in Starkville. Wallace, a senior at MSU and an active member of the school's Baptist Student Union, coordinates children's activities at the center, a ministry of the BSU, the Golden Triangle Baptist Association and area churches. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)



FOCUSED STUDY — Patricia Blasingame (right), a volunteer from First Church, Starkville, goes over an English lesson with Khun Meng Ravy of Cambodia (left) and Mitoe Suzuki of Japan. Both women are wives of international students at Mississippi State University in Starkville. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

laugh, "And I really can't do anything else."

"Also, I've been very fortunate to have an excellent associate who has complementary skills," Watkins said. "She's very assertive, practical and detailed-oriented, where I tend to be more idealistic and theoretical. I like empowering people for ministry; she gets things done. I think we're a good blend."

"I just love what I do," Scoggins explained. "I never get tired of college students."

Working side by side at MSU the last 18 years, Watkins and Scoggins have provided leadership to the BSU, involving students in everything from challenging Bible study and discipleship courses to kissing pigs to raise money for missions.

In addition to Crossroads International Friendship House, an outreach to international students and their families, the BSU at MSU also provides sponsorship and meeting facilities for "United in Christ," an intentionally interracial and interdenominational student group that meets weekly for Bible study, worship and prayer. Greg Jones, a volunteer staffer who focuses on reconciliation ministry, serves as spiritual adviser for the group, now in its fourth year. Jones is also an unofficial chaplain for the MSU football team.

Watkins admitted he'd like to see more African Americans involved in the main BSU group, adding one problem is that students of both races don't have many role models of successful interracial friendships. In addition to being co-workers, Watkins, who is

lowship on Tuesday evenings, and "Noonday," a lunch and devotion held on Wednesday.

"Family groups," small Bible study and prayer groups that meet weekly, also are available for freshman and transfer students; and "FLEA" (Fellowship, Leadership, Encouragement and Accountability) groups are open to upperclassmen.

There are also two music groups, Drawn Together and

The Fishermen, and a dramatic and creative worship team known as Acts, Too. All three groups lead church services and youth activities, as well as performing at BSU meetings.

"We try to offer a variety of ministries and activities," Watkins said. "I have found that our students want to be involved; they want to be doing something. And they respond to quality; they want and expect excellence."

BSU reaches out to internationals to help build caring 'community'

STARKVILLE, Miss. (BP) — At first glance, Crossroads International Friendship House may not look very inviting.

Located near the campus of Mississippi State University in Starkville, the modest brick structure first served as a pizza restaurant, then a community grocery store. Though it's not exactly architecturally appealing, it's what goes on inside the building today that gives it warmth and importance to the school's 700-plus international students.

"I wanted it to be a place of community," Diana Bridges, director of international activities for MSU's Baptist Student Union, said. "And to a large degree, I think we've been successful."

Stop by the center almost any morning during the week and you're likely to find a couple dozen spouses of international students involved in conversational English classes led by Bridges and volunteers from area churches. Another day, you'll discover a Bible study or perhaps a cooking or sewing class. If you're lucky, you'll drop in on the monthly pot luck luncheon and enjoy a sampling of foods from around the world.

In addition to books in English, students who visit the center can find Bibles and other reading materials as well as copies of the "Jesus" video in several languages.

Weekday afternoons, the center's activity

level accelerates as the children of international students arrive to take part in arts and crafts, games or a backyard Bible club.

These activities are coordinated by Ashley Wallace, a senior and active member of the school's BSU.

"It's exciting, kind of like being a foreign missionary, but at home," Wallace said. "It's great to see the kids interact with each other. Plus, I get to learn about people from all over the world," she added, beginning to reel off the children's home countries: China, India, Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Pakistan and others.

Located just around the corner from the local mosque, the Friendship House draws a large number of Muslim students and others representing many other faith groups or no religion at all.

"For many students, this is the first they've ever heard about Jesus. Many have misconceptions," Bridges said. And while the center maintains a friendly, non-confrontational atmosphere, she said she finds appropriate ways to bring her faith into the conversation.

BSU director Ken Watkins said the international ministry "is a great example of churches, a BSU and a local association working together." Watkins said Bill Duncan, director of the Golden Triangle Association, has been instrumental in the ministry's success.

In addition to providing volunteer workers, the association also takes care of the center's utility bills and pays a salary to Bridges through money donated monthly by Starkville's First Church.

Since she is also a BSU staff member, Bridges receives a small monthly stipend from the Mississippi Baptist Convention's Student Department.



Watkins



Bridges

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
copyright 1997

UPKH DP, B UBZH, YR
CIN ZYJICPBEVRPVV
GPAKEVP BM DYRP
PRPDYPV; DKXP CIN LKN
VCZKYJIC GPMBZP DN.
MKAP.

TVKUDV MYFP: PYJIC

Clue: A equals C

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Proverbs Thirty Five.